Area vulnerable to natural disaster

1883. SHRI SURENDRA LATH:
SHRI SURESH BHARDWAJ:

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 54% of India's area is vulnerable to earthquakes;

(b) the percentage of Orissa's land area vulnerable to earthquake, cyclonic winds and flood damage; and

(c) the steps government are taking for early alarming system for this and to strengthening the vulnerable houses which face highest risk of damage?

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As per the seismic zoning map published by Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) the country has been divided into four zones. Zone-V is considered to be most seismically active while the zone-II is the least. As per this map 16% of Orissa's land area falls in seismic zone-III and 84% falls in zone-II which are considered to be moderate and low intensity zones, respectively. The whole of Orissa State is also vulnerable to cyclones, characterized by strong winds; very heavy and intense rain fall causing floods. In particular, the coastal districts are also very much vulnerable to storm surges associated with cyclones.

(c) At present there is no early alarming system for earthquakes, as there is no scientific technique available, the world over, which can forecast earthquakes in terms of size, space and time. However, BIS has published a number of guidelines for construction, repair and seismic strengthening of buildings. Adherence to these guidelines would definitely minimize the damage to the property and loss of lives.

India Meteorological Department also has a well established and time tested system for monitoring and forecasting of intensity and movement of tropical cyclones. A network of Cyclone Detection Radars has also been installed alongwith the east and west coast.